DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 457 253 UD 034 390

AUTHOR	Portes, Pedro R.; Zady, Madelon F.
TITLE	Children of Immigrants' Self-Esteem in Early Adolescence: The Role of Ethnicity, Context, Language, and Family in Cultural Adaptation.
SPONS AGENCY	Spencer Foundation, Chicago, IL.; National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA.; Russell Sage Foundation, New York, NY.
PUB DATE	1999-04-00
NOTE	35p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Montreal, Quebec, Canada, April 19-23, 1999).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Acculturation; Cultural Differences; *Cultural Influences; *Early Adolescents; *Ethnicity; Family Influence; *Immigrants; Questionnaires; Secondary Education; *Self Esteem
IDENTIFIERS	Psychosocial Factors

ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which self-esteem differences existed across various groups of immigrant adolescents and the role of factors operating at structural and subjective levels. Data came from the Youth Adaptation and Growth Questionnaire developed for the Second Generation Project in Miami, Florida and San Diego, California. The survey was completed by 5,264 second generation eighth and ninth graders of 77 different nationalities. It examined demographics, nativity and citizenship of respondents and their parents, family size and structure, socioeconomic status (SES), psychosocial factors, academic achievement, and cultural adaptation. Data analysis indicated that there were significant differences within the immigrant subpopulations in terms of self-esteem. Different sets of predictors accounted for self-esteem and were dependent upon ethnic group membership and those groups' social context. The relative standing of each immigrant community with respect to other groups appears to have an impact on the development of individuals in those groups undergoing acculturation. For the black immigrant groups, discrimination did not influence self-esteem. (Contains 28 references and 6 tables.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 457 253

Children of Immigrants' Self-Esteem in Early Adolescence: The Role of Ethnicity, Context, Language, and Family in Cultural Adaptation*

Pedro R. Portes & Madelon F. Zady

University of Louisville

Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, April 1999, Montreal

*This study was made possible through the data provided by the principal investigator of the Children of Immigrants: The Adaptation of the Second Generation (A. Portes & R. Rumbaut) with the support of the Spencer, Russell Sage and National Science Foundations. However, the author is solely responsible for the content of the report.

UD034390

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P. Portes

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

The development of self-esteem tends to become stable in middle adolescence for mainstream groups, however relatively little is known about the self-esteem development of individuals in groups that are undergoing cultural adaptation. It has been argued that immigrant students (voluntary minorities) are alike in many psychological and social respects. However, the role of inter-group social relations and culture will be reflected by ethnicity. Using data from the Youth Adaptation and Growth Questionnaire developed for the Second Generation Project in Miami and San Diego (Portes& McLeod, 1996) that consists of the survey responses of 5,264 eighth and ninth grade participants from 77 nationalities, this study shows that significant differences exist within the immigrant sub-populations in terms of self-esteem. Different sets of predictors appear present in accounting for self-esteem that may be dependent upon ethnic group membership and those groups' social context. Groups that emigrate to other contexts are generally treated and supported differentially by the hosts and each, in turn, responds with various types and levels of agency.

Children of Immigrants' Self-Esteem In Early Adolescence: The Role of Ethnicity, Context, Language, and Family in Cultural Adaptation

Introduction

Adolescence is a time of transformation in the development of the self. In the process of cultural adaptation for ethnic newcomers, identity and self-esteem are in flux, and this period would appear to be a fruitful choice for comparative developmental research. According to much of the literature, the development of self-esteem tends to become stable in middle adolescence for mainstream groups, although this may be a function of stable factors in the social context. Relatively little is known about the self-esteem development of individuals in groups that are undergoing cultural adaptation. As it develops from an increasingly individuated self-concept, and others' concept of that self and the groups that the self belongs to, self-esteem becomes a mirror of how self-regard is being constantly mediated by others' regard. "Self-esteem is an index of the survival of the soul" (Rice, 1998). The construction of this trait is central to the quest for identity and its many components and the resolution of subsequent psycho-social crises (Erickson, 1968). The maintenance and enhancement of the perceived self, many believe, is the motive behind all behavior (Purkey, 1978; Rogers, 1961). It spans from sexual and social to ideological and vocational domains. In sum, self-esteem is central to issues concerning ego identity development, the study of cultural and individual adaptation, school achievement and related areas. In studies of children of immigrants, (Rumbaut, 1994; Suarez-Orozco, 1991; Szapocznik and Kurtines, 1980; Portes & McLeod, 1996), various aspects of adaptation have been considered in the sociological literature and in psychology (e.g., community and educational). However, the opportunities afforded by

observing socio-genetic changes on individual development have remained largely untouched in developmental psychology and in educational research. While the literature regarding cultural differences regarding a variety of traits has increased, a developmental approach has not been a priority. Rather, the literature tends to portray fossilized trait-context snapshots such as the different self-esteem-school achievement relations between African Americans and non-Hispanic Caucasians in the U. S., and other groups (Block & Robins, 1993; Harter, 1990: Ward, 1990). While the necessity of longitudinal designs is decidedly recognized in most research, including the present one, other alternatives may be worth pursuing in this regard, for example the use of comparative cross-sectional designs.

Groups vary in terms of cultural patterns which are also in the state of change. The latter factors as well as similar forces found in the host culture, in turn, influence developmental processes at the individual level. Groups that emigrate to other contexts are generally treated and supported differentially by the hosts and each, in turn, responds with various types and levels of agency to these different circumstances. The relative standing of each immigrant community, with respect to other groups, would seem to have an impact upon the development of individuals in those groups undergoing acculturation. Based on analyses of different cultural histories and contexts in a variety of immigrant groups, adaptation at the social level may be linked to the individual level in ways that go beyond research conducted in national cultures or under rather mono-cultural conditions. The aim of the study is thus limited to documenting the extent to which self-esteem differences exist across various immigrant adolescent groups and the role of factors operating at structural and subjective levels.

Conceptualizing Self-Esteem Research

The main task of adolescence is to construct and to assume an independent self that is constituted from various "components" which are inherent in developing an identity. Global self-esteem is a measure of how the person feels about this identity and its main components that may be classified along, physical, social, vocational or ethnic dimensions. Identity is difficult to separate from self-concept in that both refer to a socially constructed ideology about one self relative to "others." Self-esteem is highly associated with physical appearance and with peer social acceptance (Harter, 1989a). Parental influences are also important and concern the expression of affection, concern about the adolescents' problems, conflict and related factors (Coopersmith, 1967). Peer judgements and relations, however, have an increasing influence during this period, with classmates' support having slightly more influence than close friend support (Harter, 1987). Low self-esteem has various consequences, including depression, delinquency, eating and other conduct disorders (Damon, 1991). However, other conditions affect the seriousness of the above link, such as stressful events and school or family life transitions (Rutter & Garmezy, 1983; Vega & Rumbaut, 1991). For minority youth, developing an ethnic identity or ideology about a relational category of self represents an additional task that is not for the most part required of majority adolescents.

Factors that improve self-esteem generally concern the very causes of low self-esteem. This is particularly the case for competence areas most important to the adolescent, including achievement (Bednar, Wells & Peterson, 1989), socio-emotional support and dealing directly with problems (in contrast to avoidance or denial). The foundations of self-esteem appear to be

centered on family (Bartle, Anderson and Sabatelli, 1989) and social class (Simons and Blyth, 1987). It's relation to academic achievement has been closely examined (e.g., Purkey 1978) and found to be significant (Bell & Ward, 1980) and reciprocal (Liu, Kaplan & Lester, 1992). However, this relationship is less significant in regard to African American students, in whom self-esteem tends to remain high and less correlated with school achievement.

A growing yet varied literature has emerged with regard to cultural variations. Phinney & Rosenthal (1992) discovered higher self-esteem among minority as compared to majority adolescents, although Iheanacho (1988) and Martinez and Dukes (1991) found it to be lower in some areas, particularly when prejudice is present. In international comparisons, Agrawal (1978) was able to show that the self-esteem of U.S. youth was higher than that of Australian, Indian and Irish youth. Offer, Ostrov & Howard (1981) found similar patterns with Irish and Israeli youth, however their self-esteem was below U.S. norms. Gender differences appear to mediate these findings (Eagly & Kate, 1987). The association between achievement and self-evaluations is more positive for boys than for girls, and the relationship increases over time (Roberts, Sarigani, Peterson and Newman, 1990). English proficiency may be regarded as critical in that it represents the mastering of a vital, "gateway" cultural tool that in turn influences access to a number of activities pertinent to the validation of self. Its influence is not well established with regard to self-esteem. The literature contrasting immigrant with mainstream or with non-immigrant minority adolescents is sparse and limited mostly to a few variables that exclude important control factors or a theoretical framework.

Background of the Study

Research involving cultural differences in self-esteem is linked to different types of structural and psychological predictors including findings from cross-national studies (e.g., Derasat, 1991; Gonzalez-Forteza & Ruiz, 1993; Narita, 1995). Rumbaut (1994) found that, in the case of immigrant adolescent students, self-esteem was highly associated with parent-child conflict, depressive symptoms, English proficiency and gender. From the latter study, it was noted that early adolescents born in the U.S. tended to have lower self-esteem than those born abroad. Low school achievement and high perceptions of discrimination were also associated with low self-esteem. Black self-identity was predictive of higher self-esteem while Vietnamese and Filipino students performance on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale was significantly lower. A subsequent study of these data (Portes & MacLeod, 1996) suggested that assuming the ethnic identity imposed by the dominant society was associated with lower self-esteem and overall adaptation.

The present study is based on the above data set but aims to examine the relation of self-esteem to culture more specifically by examining the relative importance of various types of mediating factors. After controlling for language proficiency in English and SES, the study focuses on the role of several psycho-social factors pertinent to self-esteem and acculturation. A baseline of self-esteem and other factors for various groups of children of immigrants is presented. One of the goals of the study is to address what may be termed "the homogeneity hypothesis." Researchers, such as Ogbu (1992), have argued that immigrant students (voluntary minorities) are alike in many psychological and social respects, and differ from other groups (mainly majority and involuntary minorities). Immigrant youth are believed to be more achievement motivated, to display more "effort optimism" and to be less sensitive to

prejudice and discrimination as compared to involuntary minorities. The present study is designed to address some of these issues. It is predicted that significant differences exist within the immigrant sub-populations in terms of self-esteem. It is also predicted that, while a core of psycho-social variables such as SES, gender, family conflict or discrimination will be significant in the development of self-esteem, the role of inter-group social relations and culture will be reflected by ethnicity. The above hypothesis is framed within a cultural historical approach to human development (see van der Veer & Valsiner, 1994).

Method

The data for this study stem from the Youth Adaptation and Growth Questionnaire developed for the Second Generation Project in Miami and San Diego (Portes & McLeod, 1996). A full description of the design of the study, sampling, and procedures is available elsewhere (Portes & McLeod, 1996). In the spring of 1992, a total of 5,267 second-generation students were interviewed. Second generation status for children was defined as having at least one immigrant parent and being born in the United States or living the country for at least 5 years. Limiting the sample to the eighth and ninth grades, a time when almost every child is still in school, minimized the bias created by school dropouts in the higher school years. One-half of the sample was born outside the U.S. before age 12, while the other half were born in the U.S. and had immigrant parents. Gender and grade also evenly split the sample.

The survey included 5,264 children from 77 different nationalities interviewed in 42 different schools in the school districts of Dade County (Miami), Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale), ($N > 2800$)and the San Diego metropolitan area ($N > 2400$). The former were

from Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Colombia, the West Indies, and other Latin American countries while the latter were from Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and other Asian groups (China, Japan, Korea and India). After securing parental consent, the study accessed school records thus allowing researchers to match the characteristics of the respondents, including their nationality, sex, age, parental education, length of U.S. residence and aspirations, with their performance in school.

Sample Selection

To be eligible for inclusion in the study, a student had to be foreign-born or U.S.-born with at least one foreign-born parent. Since the school districts do not collect information on the nativity or immigration status of parents, a brief initial survey of all eighth and ninth graders was carried out to determine their eligibility. All eligible students then took parental consent forms home. The return rate was 75% for the San Diego group and about 67% of the South Florida group (Rumbaut, 1994). Respondents from various Asian nationalities were excluded from this study due to their heterogeneity and small sample sizes, so that only eight groups were considered.

Control Measures

The survey provided data on the respondents' demographic characteristics, the nativity and citizenship of both the respondents and their parents, family size and structure, and socioeconomic status (SES) including parents' education and occupation, and home ownership. To examine the relation of psychosocial variables, culture and achievement, students from over 27 cultural groups were arbitrarily grouped into eight categories: Southeast Asian,

(Vietnamese, Thai, Cambodia, Hmong), Jamaican, Haitian, Mexican, Cuban in public school and private school), Other Latin American and Filipino. (The rationale for these groupings is based on the commonality of experience and some pilot analyses.) Grade, age, English language proficiency, maternal age, attendance at an inner city school and parental SES were included as control variables. Grade indexed cultural adaptation indirectly since those in the earlier grade were more recent immigrants and generally were less bilingual). Table 1 shows the distributions of these demographic variables.

Socio-Psychological Measures

The respondents' perceptions of their family's socio-economic status at present and five years earlier were considered. Time management was examined through a composite of hours spent daily on homework divided by hours spent watching television. The language used in daily routines with peers and family was examined in the analyses. Respondents' peer relationships were examined separately in light of numbers of friends and the number of friends of similar ethnic background.

A range of attitudinal and other psychosocial variables were analyzed. Measures of parent-child conflict, depression, familism and Americanism were included as defined in an earlier study (Rumbaut, 1995). These scales assessed the strength of family bonds (Familism), U.S. acculturation (Americanism) and the degree of parent-child conflict from the interview items. Parent-Child Conflict (PCC) is a composite that includes three items involving parent and child discord. Self-esteem was measured by the 10-item Rosenberg scale (Rosenberg, 1965, 1979). Depressive symptoms were measured with a 4-item subscale from the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D) scale (these items have been found to be predictive of major depression among adolescents (Vega, et al., 1993; Vega and Rumbaut,

1991). The Ethnic Language Index (ELI) scale included items which measure the student's facility in reading, writing, understanding and speaking the parents' native language. English Proficiency Index (EPI) indicates the student's proficiency in reading, understanding and speaking English. The current sample was found to be English proficient for the most part.

Measures Based on Factor Analyses

Several measures were developed through factor analysis from selected interview items concerning perceived, and felt discrimination, achievement motivation and other variables relevant to cultural adaptation (See Portes, 1999). The following measures were developed first individually, and then a decision that was based conceptually was made to reduce the data to distinct factors. Factor scores were derived for further analyses.

The first factor was defined by eight variables which dealt mainly with discrimination felt by respondents and was called Felt Discrimination. These items, unlike those in subsequent factor, indexed direct experiences of discrimination. The second factor loaded on four variables that represented perceived discrimination and was called Perceived Discrimination. A separate factor analysis defined by variables concerned with achievement motivation, produced a predictor named Achievement Motivation. Factor scores were derived for the above factors and employed in subsequent regression analyses. Factor loadings can be found in Table 2.

Two Factor-based Cultural Adaptation Measures

The interview schedule included several items and scales that were relevant to student's cultural adaptation. The students' cultural identity development, for example, could be indexed by their choice of language in daily routines, their parents' own cultural identification and certain attitudes or perceptions with respect to American culture. A factor analysis of

twelve variables was conducted to examine these constructs of cultural identity in relation to the respondents' transition toward American culture. Although a bipolar factor was hypothesized ranging from preferences for natal to American ways, a two-factor solution was found to be more tenable, accounting for 49% of the variance. The "pull" of the native culture on the individual, and the extent to which respondents' first language is maintained, served as an index of the respondents' ethnic identification and adaptation in the first factor. The latter also served to measure the respondents' native language proficiency. The parents' use of the native language also served to differentiate the two factors. The second factor consisted of items relating to parents' own cultural adaptation and the respondents' assimilation into the mainstream American culture as measured by the Americanism scale, which had a small negative loading on the first factor. The pattern matrices are presented in Table 3. From the above factor analysis, two composites were formed and used in the regression with the other measures described earlier to examine the degree to which students' cultural adaptation and evolving social identity could be discerned and related to their school achievement. The two factors were named "Ethnic Cultural Pull" (ECP) and American Cultural Pull" (ACP) and had Cronbach alpha coefficients of .66 and .80 respectively. This analysis suggests that respondents' maintenance of the native language and fidelity to their culture of origin is independent, to a great extent, of their assimilation into American culture.

Other Predictor Variables

The number of ethnic friends and total number of friends were also considered to examine the role of peer influence. Time management was a predictor variable that was constructed as a proportion of the hours spent by the respondent doing homework to the number of hours watching television. Father absence, as well as that of the mother, and time living in the U.S. were also examined before building the regression model.

Factor and scale scores were derived from the above analyses, and these along with other questionnaire items served as independent variables on a regression analysis of self-esteem, controlled for age, grade, SES, English language proficiency, inner city school attendance and mother's age. The analytic strategy was to build the best overall regression model with three sets of measures, the demographic, the socio-psychological and ethnic group membership and then to select those sets which accounted for the greatest amount of the variance in self-esteem. The overall multiple regression analysis model is summarized in Table 4. The significant predictors of self-esteem are presented in the Regression Coefficients Table 5. All predictors carried t-values of greater than 5.6 with the exception of gender and Jamaican which carried t-values of 3 and 2 respectively. The second research question was examined with a MANCOVA described in the next session.

Results

Table 4 shows a three-step model for predicting the self-esteem of immigrant youth. The first block of demographic variables accounted for 8 % of the variance in self-esteem and served as a control block for subsequent variables. Social class differences were not found to be significant but were also controlled before examining the other variables. Gender differences were statistically significant but of minor practical importance (see Table 5 for the beta coefficients in the final regression model). After controlling for gender differences (which will be examined more carefully in another study) and English Proficiency, which was significant ($p = .000$), several psycho-cultural factors emerged as predictive of self-esteem in this heterogenous group of early adolescents.

With psycho-cultural predictors entered as a block in the second step, the model accounted for an additional 23% of the variance in self-esteem. Depressive symptoms (CESD) were found to be the most significant predictor of self-esteem, followed by parent- child

conflict. The third and fourth most important psycho-cultural predictors were achievement motivation and school achievement total, which was included in this block as an index of school adaptation by the student and family. It was also found that familism had a negative effect on self-esteem. Finally, the ECP/ACP Factors (Ethnic and American Cultural Pull), perceived and felt discrimination, father absence and time management had no significant effect in this model.

In the last step of the regression analysis. the effect of ethnicity was explored by entering a block of "dummied" predictor variables to determine if between-group differences were present after controlling for the above variables. This block was significant but only explained 0.5% of the variance in self-esteem. Of the seven ethno-cultural groups, only the Jamaicans differed from the Cuban reference group although the difference was not of practical significance. From Table 6 it can be seen that Southeast Asians, Filipinos,and Mexicans tended to have the lowest self-esteem followed by Haitians and other Latin Americans. The Cuban, and the Jamaican/West Indies groups had high self- esteem relative to these groups. However, after the above variables are accounted for, group differences in self-esteem were no longer found to be significant.

An analysis of variance that controlled for English proficiency and SES was used in order to examine the extent of between-group differences in ethnicity, as well as gender. The results showed that the ethnic groups varied significantly with respect to the psycho-social predictors considered in the regression equation that served as the five dependent variables in this design ($p=.000$). Gender differences were also found to be significant for every variable ($p=.000$) but not the gender by ethnicity interaction at the multivariate level.

Discussion

This study confirms previous findings that link self-esteem to parent-child relations, particularly conflictive ones, and to mental health status in general with depressive symptoms gauged by the CESD measure. Conflict in the home appears related to acculturation stress, often associated with communication breakdowns indexed by language problems, embarrassment felt by teens regarding their parents, and issues pertaining to educational aspirations and performance in school. While these factors appear interrelated, it is noteworthy that they are not collinear and deserve further analysis regarding causality. Parent-child conflict, particularly for males, predicts depression. Rumbaut (1994) suggested that depressive symptoms are predicted largely by both discrimination and conflict at home and that gender and SES both influenced these traits. As expected, achievement motivation and success in school account for differences in self-esteem. However, familialism tends to be negatively associated with self-esteem, as it was with school achievement (Portes, 1999). It appears that having a very close relation to the family of origin may be in conflict with the independence and individualism that is associated with high self-esteem in these groups. The above factors thus tend to show how self-esteem is negotiated in the inter-cultural plane for children of immigrants.

This study differs from earlier ones employing these data in that different predictive factors are examined for group differences in terms of self-esteem and its antecedents. As to related studies, it seems erroneous to assume that immigrant children form a homogeneous population. Although the regression analysis suggests that the effect of ethnicity as a whole is of little practical significance, the argument made here is that the effect of ethnicity bears, to a considerable extent, precisely on psycho-social factors, some of which are considered here. Cultural differences are essentially differences in the belief systems, expectations and socio-

biological traits that become meaningful in the social plane. Perhaps the results can be expressed best in terms of the conceptual model employed to explain within-group differences in achievement for these groups at large and self-esteem for some of the Asian sub-groups (Portes, 1999; Portes, Zady & Palachandra, 1999) . The model draws attention to at least four aspects of adaptation related to immigrant groups:

a) the cultural history and traits of the immigrant group,

b) the degree to which the group is compatible with or conducive toward adaptation into either domestic minorities' cycle of poverty or compatibility with the mainstream,

c) the host culture's reception including reactions to ethnic markers (both phenotypic and cultural) in a particular historical moment, and

d) the political and social capital developed by the immigrant group in the host culture that supports its members' agency in the community.

A closer approximation may be possible in accounting for the present data based upon the above model. For example, Cubans in private school have factor "a" compatibility with the mainstream's "b" factor (the degree to which the group is compatible with or conducive toward adaptation into either domestic minorities' cycle of poverty or compatibility with the mainstream), and count on the protective factors inherent in their enclave or "d" factor. Also, the reaction by the host culture (c) to the latter has been relative benevolent due, in part, to compatibility in markers which facilitate adaptation, compatible views regarding political history, and also having more means available, some provided by the host government (unlike the cases of unwelcome Haitians or Mexicans for instance). This model would predict a similar pattern for Cubans in public schools but to a lesser extent than those in private school.

Although the former group's "b" and "c" factors tend to be lower than those for Cubans in private school, they still count with a strong "d" factor.

Some of the "Asian" subgroups have support from ethnic enclaves (the "d" factor) which have neutralized or overcome, to some extent, the discriminatory reactions on the part of the mainstream's "c" factor, others have not. As an example, more recent Filipino immigrants are joining a more established cultural group. Because Vietnamese immigrants have been emigrating in large numbers since 1975, the community-based or "d" factor is somewhat more in place for this group as well. Laotian and Cambodian samples who have more recent migrations into less established communities, on the other hand, are not protected from the reactions of the mainstream.

The "a" or the cultural history of the last two groups may differ widely from other Asians who have emigrated. While most Asian groups have a higher proportion of two-parent households, father absence among Cambodians due to "death of the father prior to arrival in U.S. is a reflection of the extraordinary harsh contexts of exit" (Rumbaut, 1994) (see also Rumbaut & Ima, 1988 and Nidorf, 1985). Additionally, Rumbaut, (1994) found that Laotian and Cambodian adolescents had parents with the lowest levels of education, parents who were usually out of work, the highest rates of poverty and welfare dependency, and they were more likely to attend inner city schools. These students face a double risk because of their "b" factor compatibility with domestic minorities' cycle of poverty and the subsequent negative reaction from the dominant group leading to lowered self-esteem. In contrast to the Jamaicans in this sample (or African-Americans in other studies) the noted cultural differences significantly influence responses to a self-esteem measure.

In sum, the study is unique in showing how ethnic differences in self-esteem are negligible after certain key mediating factors are taken into consideration. Some plausible hunches may be advanced as to why different factors play a role in this sample that can only be clarified by contrasting with non-immigrant samples. In the study, almost a third of the variance in self-esteem was explained, which tends to be higher than in most studies with smaller samples and number of factors considered. Variation in self-esteem among the ethnic groups considered here appears to be more associated with demographic and psycho-cultural variables than with ethnicity per se, as was the case for academic achievement (Portes, 1999).

Different sets of predictors appear present in accounting for self-esteem that may be dependent upon ethnic group membership and those groups' social context indirectly. Some of these predictors appear unique to immigrant, and possibly other minority groups, relative to the predictors found for the mainstream population. Other predictors appear to be more "universal," such as depression and parent-child conflict. The latter would seem to have a unidirectional causal relationship that was addressed partly in Rumbaut's 1994 study. It would seem plausible to consider that immigrant early adolescents might experience family conflict in ways that are different from non-immigrant groups and that, in turn, differ by culture of origin. Certain family values and respect for parents might be more salient in one ethnic group as compared to another. Parental tolerance and child rearing style might also differ by not only culture of origin but also by immigration status (i.e., 1st vs. 2nd or 3rd generation). In other words, this immigrant sample appears to include not only the "normative" parent-child conflict or adolescent storm and stress (Erikson, 1968), but other sources of stress which account for depression being the most important predictor in the study. The immigrant adolescent not only must deal with particularly "old-fashioned," perhaps less flexible parents from the old country, they must also confront potential psychological pain (Sandhu & Portes, 1997) from

discrimination toward their group, depending on culture of origin and context of reception (Portes, 1999). As they begin to individuate and forge an identity, these youths' adaptation depends largely on the extent to which they speak English and achieve well in school. Too much identification with the family of origin does not seem conducive to high self-esteem, something that may suggest difficulties in adapting to and becoming accepted in the mainstream school culture. It does seem then that successful adaptation for these early adolescents depends largely on the extent to which they can navigate between two social worlds and be effective "border-crossers" in an ecological sense.

Conclusion

These data show enough commonalties in the role of social-psychological factors, with some exceptions, as to validate prior research in which the effects of aforementioned predictors appear robust. The exceptions, however, are nevertheless noteworthy. Migration is a stressful life event by definition, particularly when social support systems are lacking. These adolescents' self-esteem is shaped somewhat differently from that of mono-culturals or relatively-more acculturated minorities. The effect of culture of origin, remains difficult to isolate from other intertwined factors that may be regarded as situational and relatively transient from a socio-genetic vantage point. The effect of culture seems masked by factors relevant in the construction of ethnicity in individuals' lives. One other finding is noteworthy. In general, the correlation between self-esteem and achievement, another potential indicator of adaptation, is moderately significant (.40) in national samples. Yet, in these data, the correlation is not significant. This suggests a number of possibilities, from the notion that self-esteem, as presently defined, is differently understood and reported, to the idea that it is a culturally defined construct that has not, in fact, been duly measured. If the latter were true,

one might expect differences in the correlation and reliability coefficients depending on group background.

With respect to group differences, several context-related observations deserve attention. It appears that for the Black immigrant groups, discrimination did not influence self-esteem. Socialized in homogeneous cultures, these students appear protected by a cultural difference (which also is present in non-immigrant African American adolescents) that may reflect in how esteem of the self is organized in their formation of mind. The latter groups' self-esteem is at the same level as that of Cubans, who tend to be more privileged, acculturated and who have the most favorable context of reception (Portes, A., 1990) in South Florida. In conclusion, the findings suggest that we may not be assessing pure cultural differences in the categorization of ethnicity. Rather, the ethnic marker is packaged or constituted by more than a group's values, mores and other cultural ingredients but also by social histories, contexts of reception and interrelations with other groups and society among many factors.

References

Bednar, R. L., Wells, M. G. & Peterson, S. R. (1989). Self-esteem. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Bagley, C. & Mallick, K. (1995). Negative self-perception and components of stress in Canadian, British, and Hong Kong adolescents. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 81(1), 123-127.

Coopersmith, S. (1967). The antecedents of self-esteem. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman.

Damon, W. (1991). Self-concept, adolescent. In R. M. Lerner, a. C. Petersen & J. Brooks-Gunn (Eds.), Encyclopedia of adolescence, 2. NY: Garland.

Erickson, E. H. (1968). Identity and youth in crisis. NY: W.W. Norton.

Harter, S (1987). The determinants and mediatorial role of global self-worth in children. In N. Eisenberg (Ed), Contemporary issues in developmental psychology. New York: Wiley.

Harter, S. (1990). Processes underlying adoescent self-concept formation. In R. Montemayor, G. R. Adams, & T. P. Gulotta (Eds.) From childhood to adolescence: A transitional period? Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Harter, S., & Lee, L. (1989). Manifestations of true and false selves in adolescence. Paper presented at the meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Kansas City.

Martinez, R. & Dukes, R.L. (1991). Ethnic and gender differences in self-esteem. Youth and Society, 22, 318-338.

Nidorff, J. F. (1985). Mental health and refugee youths: A model for diagnostic training. In T. Owan & E. Choken (Eds.) Southeast Asian mental health, treatment,

prevention, services, training and research. Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement. ERIC Document ED266199.

Offer, D., Ostrov, E., & Howard, K. (1981). The adolescent: A psychological self-portrait. NY: Basic Books.

Ogbu, J. U. (1992). Understanding cultural diversity and learning. Educational Researcher, 21(8), 5-4.

Phinney, J.S. & Rosenthal, D. A. (1992). Ethnic identity in adolescence: Process, context and outcome. In R. R. Adams, T. P. Gullotta & R. Montemayor (Eds.), Adolescent identity formation. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Portes A. E. & MacLeod D. (1996). What shall I call myself? Hispanic identity formation in the second generation. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 9 (3) Routledge 1996 0141-9870.

Portes, P. R. (1999) Social and psychological factors in the academic achievement of children of immigrants. American Educational Research Journal, 36, 489-507.

Portes, P. R., Zady, M. F. & Palachandra, B. (1999) Cultural Differences in Self-Esteem: Ethnic Variations in the Adaptation of Recent Immigrant Asian Adolescents. In D.S. Sandhu (Ed.) Asian and Pacific Islander Americans: Issues and concerns for counseling and psychotherapy (pp. 137-150). Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

Purkey, W. w. (1978). Inviting school success: A self-concept approach to teaching and learning. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Rice, P. (1998) The adolescent (8th ed.). NY: Allyn & Bacon.

Rogers, C. R. (1961). On becoming a person: A therapist's view of psychotherapy. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin.

Rosenberg, M. (1979). Conceiving the self. New York : Basic Book.

Rumbaut, R. (1994). The crucible within: Ethnic identity, self-esteem, and segmented assimilation among children of immigrants. International Migration Review, 28, 748-794.

Rumbaut, R. G. & Ima, K. (1988). The adaptation of Southwest Asian refugee youth: A comparative study. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement. ERIC Accession Number: ED299372.

Rutter, M. & Garmezy, N. (1983). Developmental psychopathology. In P. H. Mussen (Ed.), Handbook of child psychology, 4 (4th ed.). NY: Wiley.

Suarez-Orozco, M. M. (1989). Migration, minority status, and education: European dilemmas and responses in the 1990s. Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 22, 99-115.

Szapocznik, J. & Kurtines, W. (1980). Acculturation, biculturalism, and adjustment among Cuban Americans. In a. M. Padilla (Ed.), Acculturation: theory, models, and some new findings (pp. 139-159). Boulder, CO: Westview.

Van der veer, R. & Valsiner, J. (1991). Understanding Vygotsky: a quest for synthesis. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Vega, W. A., Gil, A. G., Warheit, G. J., Zimmerman, R. S. & Apospori, E. (1993). Acculturation and delinquent behavior among Cuban American adolescents: toward an empirical model. American Journal of Communicty Psychology, 21(1), 113-125.

Vega, W. A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (1991). Ethnic minorities and mental health. Annual Review of Sociology,17: 352-383.

Table 1

Demographics

Value Label	N
Cubans in Private School	101
Cubans in Public School	855
Haitians	123
Latin Americans	839
Jamaicans	169
Mexicans	549
South East Asians	436
Filipinos	696
Females	1968
Males	1800

Table 2

Factor Loadings and Items for Factor Solution

	Factor: Felt Discrimination
.99	Feel discriminated by counselors
.99	Feel discriminated by Cubans
.99	Feel discriminated by Blacks
.99	Feel discriminated by students
.99	Feel discriminated by Whites
.99	Feel discriminated by teachers
.99	Personally felt discrimination
.47	Discriminated despite education level
	Factor: Perceived Discrimination
.72	Much conflict between racial/ethnic groups
.71	Racial discrimination in economic opportunities in U.S.
.60	Americans feel superior to foreigners
.56	American way of life weakens family
	Factor: Achievement Motivation
.84	Level of education I will attain
.75	Highest level of education I want to achieve
.64	Chance of getting wanted job
.62	Assessment of getting this job
.50	Type of job I want

Varimax Rotations

Table 3

Pattern Matrix for Cultural Adaptation Factors

	Factor: Ethnic Cultural Pull (ECP)
-.68	Is mother a U.S. citizen?
-.63	Is father a U. S. citizen?
.57	Ethnic language use with parents
-.54	Father identifies as American
-.52	Mother identifies as American
.49	Frequency of use of ethnic language with friends
.49	Use language other than English with friends
-.43	Americanism scale
	Factor: American Cultural Pull (ACP)
.15	Is mother a U.S. citizen?
.22	Is father a U.S. citizen?
-.89	Frequency of use of ethnic language at home

Oblimin Rotation

Table 4 Regression Model Summary Table

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Sig.
1	.284	.080	.080	.000
2	.556	.309	.228	.000
3	.560	.314	.005	.003

Table 5

Significant Predictors of Self-esteem from Regression Using Youth Adaptation Sample

Variable	Beta	Sig.
English Proficiency Index	.129	.000
Gender	.050	.002
Parent-Child Conflict	-.218	.000
Depression	-.258	.000
Familism	-.091	.000
Achievement Motivation	.143	.000
Total Achievement	.143	.000
Jamaican	.044	.028

$R^2 = .314$

Note: Cubans in private school served as the reference group

Table 6
Relative Importance of Predictors

Variable		PriCub			PubCub			Mexican			Haitian			Total	
		Mean	N	SD	Mean	N	SD	Mean	N	SD	Mean	N	SD	Mean	SD
Self-Esteem	Female				33.4	508	5.51	31.8	319	5.40	33.6	93	5.35	32.6	5.37
	Male	34.7	103	4.48	34.4	416	5.12	32.1	332	5.35	33.0	51	5.81	33.2	5.22
	Total				33.9	924	5.36	32.0	651	5.37	33.4	144	5.51	32.9	5.30
Parent-Child	Female				5.00	503	1.80	5.00	317	1.90	5.61	90	2.11	5.15	1.88
Conflict	Male	4.91	103	1.55	4.75	412	1.68	5.08	331	1.92	5.88	51	1.74	5.07	1.88
	Total				4.88	915	1.75	5.04	648	1.91	5.71	141	1.98	5.11	1.84
Depression	Female				7.04	507	2.54	7.05	319	2.70	7.05	91	2.97	7.09	2.71
	Male	5.99	103	2.31	5.85	413	2.25	6.19	338	2.35	6.69	51	2.39	6.04	2.26
	Total				6.51	920	2.48	6.61	657	2.56	6.92	142	2.77	6.58	2.56
English	Female				11.5	507	1.07	10.4	319	2.07	11.6	92	1.01	11.1	1.61
Proficiency	Male	11.4	103	1.17	11.4	415	1.20	10.3	334	1.88	11.4	51	1.04	10.9	1.67
	Total				11.5	922	1.13	10.4	653	1.97	11.5	143	1.02	11.0	1.64
Grade Point	Female				2.4	501	.89	2.4	319	.79	2.5	93	.78	2.7	.89
Average	Male	2.7	101	.80	2.1	413	.93	2.0	341	.85	2.0	51	.87	2.4	.91
	Total				2.2	914	.92	2.2	660	.84	2.3	144	.85	2.5	.91
Achievement	Female				.34	493	.88	-.33	298	1.10	.54	87	.81	.18	.94
Motivation	Male	.60	101	.64	.04	391	.94	-.59	317	1.04	.16	49	.93	-.11	.98
	Total				.21	884	.92	-.46	615	1.08	.41	136	.87	.03	.97
Total	Female				.04	508	.52	-.28	319	.56	-.22	93	.47	.06	.61
Achievement	Male	.64	103	.41	-.01	416	.57	-.31	341	.57	-.36	51	.46	.03	.63
	Total				.01	924	.54	-.30	660	.56	-.27	144	.47	.04	.62

Variable		LatinAm Mean	N	SD	Jamaican Mean	N	SD	SEAsian Mean	N	SD	Filipino Mean	N	SD	Total Mean	SD
Self-Esteem	Female	33.3	492	5.32	34.1	119	5.10	30.9	299	4.97	31.9	397	5.04	32.6	5.37
	Male	33.6	415	5.07	34.4	59	4.59	31.1	294	5.14	33.2	380	5.04	33.2	5.22
	Total	33.4	907	5.20	34.2	178	4.93	31.0	593	5.05	32.6	777	5.08	32.9	5.30
Parent-Child Conflict	Female	5.02	484	1.83	5.07	120	1.78	5.48	298	1.77	5.35	394	1.97	5.15	1.88
	Male	4.85	406	1.66	5.32	59	1.95	5.66	292	1.90	5.15	379	1.85	5.07	1.81
	Total	4.94	890	1.76	5.15	179	1.83	5.57	590	1.84	5.25	773	1.92	5.11	1.84
Depression	Female	7.33	489	2.87	7.03	119	2.64	6.73	299	2.53	7.27	397	2.78	7.09	2.71
	Male	5.77	412	2.05	6.58	59	2.85	6.30	294	2.36	6.08	381	2.16	6.04	2.26
	Total	6.62	901	2.64	6.88	178	2.71	6.52	593	2.45	6.68	778	2.57	6.58	2.56
English Proficiency	Female	11.1	494	1.53	11.7	121	.76	10.0	299	2.13	11.5	397	1.12	11.1	1.61
	Male	11.1	416	1.49	11.6	59	.89	9.5	295	2.09	11.4	378	1.17	10.9	1.67
	Total	11.1	910	1.51	11.7	180	.81	9.7	594	2.12	11.4	775	1.14	11.0	1.64
Grade Point Average	Female	2.4	487	.88	2.6	121	.91	3.2	299	.68	3.2	398	.70	2.7	.89
	Male	2.2	414	.93	2.4	59	.78	2.7	296	.78	2.7	383	.75	2.4	.91
	Total	2.3	901	.91	2.6	180	.87	3.0	595	.77	2.9	781	.76	2.5	.91
Achievement Motivation	Female	.29	471	.90	.46	117	.79	-.14	285	.98	.18	388	.80	.18	.94
	Male	.05	402	.91	-.02	59	1.00	-.48	268	1.01	-.09	367	.82	-.11	.98
	Total	.18	873	.91	.30	176	.89	-.30	553	1.01	.05	755	.82	.03	.97
Total Achievement	Female	.02	494	.56	.07	121	.58	-.01	299	.66	.36	398	.60	.06	.61
	Male	-.01	417	.60	.10	59	.58	-.09	296	.64	.26	383	.56	.03	.63
	Total	.00	911	.58	.08	180	.58	-.05	595	.65	.31	781	.58	.04	.62

Note: Changing N's reflect missing cases.